The Founder Fire

News and Views of the Founder Fellowship

The American Youth Foundation, 3713 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.

December 1936

A PROPHETIC CHRISTMAS TO YOU

Greetings, Founders, old-fashioned greetings: Be merry, be happy, this Christmastide!

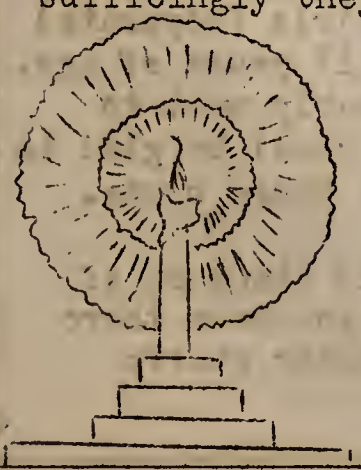
Ours is a prophetic Faith, always repudiating defeat, always claiming victory, always pressing forward unto yet greater triumphs. At a time when the sky of Judaism was storm-clouded and lowering, He came, heralded in prophetic song:

"Glory to God in the highest
And on earth Peace,
Goodwill toward men!"

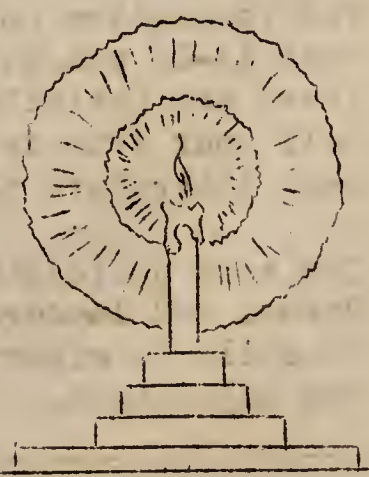
A diminutive little lyric, but positively cosmic in scope: Glory to God, Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Man, - God, the World, Man - all included in a single breath of song. And how poignantly needed now. Is there any cry today more piercing than the cry for Peace, any call more urgent than the call for Goodwill through mutual understanding, any longing deeper than the soul's perennial longing for God?

Yet all this, in possibility and power, came to earth long ago with the advent of our Lord. Through Him came God's self-revelation as a God of love and truth and grace; through Him the revelation of man's potential sonship with God; through Him the living possibilities of a Kingdom of God on earth.

Read the great Christmas hymns (never mind the little ditties) and see how all-sufficingly they acclaim Him:



"Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace,
Hail the Son of Righteousness;
Light and Life to all He brings,
Risen with Healing in His wings.
Mild, He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to Raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them Second Birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King."



Such a hymn links us in thought with the whole historic life of our great church which through nineteen centuries and more has been acclaiming the name of its Founder and Head in terms of universal Lordship.

It is His "Way of Life" we believe in, because we find it to be true and adventurous and of endless worth. We speak of it in our camps as the "Jesus Way of Living." "Our own selves, at our very best, all the time, in living leadership of our world towards its ever increasing best," that is our Founder philosophy of living. We'll find our joy doing that with all our might,- "and with God be the rest."

So, while the Nazis and the Fascists and the Communists and the Militarists across the water are glaring at each other through eyes of fear and distrust and hate, and threatening war every day, and while the western Democracies are hopefully lining up for peace; let us, who are believers in the Prince of Peace, deliberately and prophetically be glad this Christmastide, giving and receiving our gifts of love and goodwill, singing all the Christmas songs we know, shouting out this Glory-Song of the ages as the triumph song of our spirits:

"Glory to God in the Highest
And on earth Peace,
Goodwill toward men!"

And let us gird ourselves in spirit for a victorious thrust into the New Year, that we may capture life anew, and live it radiantly.

And now, may we lay our hands upon each one of you, in spirit, and say:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face to shine upon you,
And be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you Peace.

-- Wadjepi (P. G. Orwig)
-- Dad (R. A. Waite)
-- Horace (Marie E. Shaver)
-- Kodaya (O. W. Warmingham)

TO OUR CAMPERS AND LEADERS OF OTHER YEARS

We've often said it and we mean it. We never lose sight of our old campers ... if ... they will do their part and keep us informed of address changes.

Here is your Founder blotter and some items of news pertaining to the Founder Camps. Nearly 1000 campers and leaders from more than forty states were enrolled in the various camps at Miniwanca. Merrowvista enrollment grossed 130.

The Foundation now maintains camps for Younger Boys and Younger Girls (separate) ages 11-15 years; also Pre-Senior Camps for girls and boys 15½ - 17 years of age. These are Christian character, recreational camps. You will probably want to tell your friends about these camps. Enrollment is limited. We shall be glad to send literature to parents whose children you might recommend for these camps.

The same philosophy of balanced living, according to the Four-fold Standard of Jesus, and leadership training that characterized our camps when you were there is still in effect in all our camps. Strong faculty and group-leader staffs are maintained.

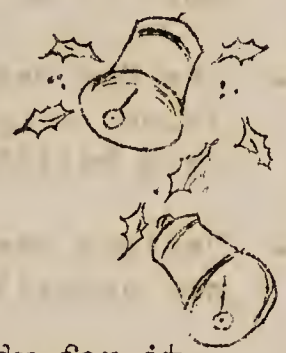
We have always held that it is preferable for old campers and leaders to pick the young people who are to be trained in the Founder Camps. Why not make up your mind to be personally represented this year by some young person of your own choosing? We will work with you on a plan to get that young person to camp.

And finally, why not come back yourself? I mean it. Every year an increasing number of old campers and leaders from the 1914-18-20-25 or '30 days come back to serve and to get new inspiration. This is a sincere invitation to you to join us next summer. If interested, drop me a note for information. It would be great if some of you would load up a car with campers and drive up for two great weeks of vacation and fellowship.

A Merry Christmas to you and may your New Year be rich in personal challenges and victories.

-- Wadjepi

MINISINO'S MESSAGE



1937 will be a year of tremendous growth.

You and I must be a part of this growth. We will be, if we are ready for it. The greatest progress of my life has come from following the Four-Fold program. With such unusual possibilities ahead of us this next year, it is most essential that we Founders follow it more than ever. We know what it means. To pass along that meaning to others should be one of our 1937 goals. Let's put down some definite programs.

1. Grow Strong: Watch diet. Take regular exercise. Work hard but get plenty of rest to build up your reserves.

2. Grow Alert: Brain power is needed. Study the lives of successful people. Train for leadership. Put your mind on one big goal and concentrate on it.

3. Grow Friendly: Determine to cut out every kind of grouch. There are so many people you can help, and who can help you. Cultivate more friends.

4. Grow Spiritually: Religion is a part of every person's life, whether he admits it or not. To tell the truth, to be honest, to be clean morally, to look to a Heavenly Father to guide you ... that's simple religion and builds strength into character. To lie, to cheat, to have impure thoughts ... that's the degrading side. Why be afraid to strive for spiritual values?

Four-Fold Growth! That's a challenging program for the New Year. That's our Founder's program. We would be unworthy Founders if we failed to follow it ourselves.

-- Minisino (Wm. H. Danforth)

NEWS ITEMS ABOUT CAMP MERROWVISTA

- Did you know that Camp Merrowvista now comprises 450 acres of mountain, woods, meadow, and lake? There are two Ossipee Mountain peaks on the camp property.

- The old barn, made over into a most attractive Assembly building, is more than 100 years old. The old hand-hewn timbers, held together with wooden pegs, are just as they were when the building was erected.

- Merrowvista equipment has been steadily increasing. Some of you oldsters would hardly recognize the place - 12 or 15 fine "living" cabins and several class cabins having been added during the past few years.

- Overnight visitors to Merrowvista have the fun of sleeping in the new Guest Cabin which has accommodations for a dozen or more people, two to a room ... more if we "crowd 'em in."

- The New Hampshire House, the gift of Trustee Alfred H. Avery, in honor of his friend - Lyford A. Merrow, is not new to campers of the past five or six years. This building is one of the most useful and attractive at Camp Merrowvista.

- Various changes have been made in the Headquarters House atop the hill. You can actually walk indoors now to buy your nickel bar of candy at the store.

- The Hut is still as was - and long may it continue so ... a perfect gem.

- Down on the waterfront ... stones are being piled up between the huge concrete pillars on the dock. When the job is completed, the more or less shaky "board-walk" will be done away with and we'll have a solid footing clear out to the deep water.

- The great Stone Ledge, on the mountain overlooking the camp, is now the scene of an annual Sunday evening vesper service in the Older Girls' and Older Boys' Camps. The "overnight Adirondack shack" projected five or six years ago - to be built near the rock ledge, will surely have to be revived.

- Who's going to be the first to offer to build several tennis courts at Merrowvista? Here is a project worthy of a group of old campers.

- Merrowvista needs the backing and support of old leaders and graduates in the matter of enrolling new campers. The boys' enrollment hit bottom last year with 29 boys. The girls' enrollment was 62. That should challenge every loyal Eastern Founder into action. Why not get serious about this and make this in every way a big come-back year? We'll be glad to hear from you old-timers on this. What do you say?

- There is every prospect that the Merrowvista dates will be shifted back to the fore part of the summer. This will enable the Eastern student campers to go to camp just as soon as school is out ... then the job, or other plans for the summer. This arrangement will permit an interchange of leaders and the Director is eagerly looking forward to a renewal of contacts in both camps.

- You oldsters who now are esteemed citizens in your own right, why not "sell" some organization, to which you belong, on sending a boy or girl to Merrowvista - from a church, high school, 4-H club - any group that might be interested in helping a young person train for Christian leadership.

NEWS ITEMS ABOUT CAMP MINIWANCA

- Step lively, please, on the new dust-proof cement road - from bridge to Tipi.

- Take your heart out of your mouth - new concrete abutments now make it perfectly safe to drive over the camp bridge.

- Assured! Three new log cabin class-houses with fireplaces ... gifts, all of them. The development of our Educational Center, with Minisino Lodge as the key building, has begun. We hope that classes on leaky-roofed porches are a thing of the past.

- A new sanitary system is being installed in the main camping unit on Lake Michigan. Plans have been furnished at our request by the State Health Department. Increased toilet facilities also are planned.

- Kentucky House, our craft headquarters, will have an addition built to it which will make this building front on the ridge, overlooking the Lake. The craft department will have added facilities for doing its work.

- That big, new parking lot certainly did take care of a lot of cars last summer. Where did we ever put them before?

- Yowsah! there will be enough tent platforms next summer to take care of everybody "in tents" .... 50 of them. That means re-locating Susquehanna Bay to make way for the development of the Educational unit and the building of six additional platforms.

- We're fighting hard to bring electric power to Stony Lake. Power will mean better service all around. We particularly need electric refrigeration at Camp Miniwanca. The old ice refrigerator is sadly outgrown. And we can attach an automatic pumping device to our water system ... and, we hope, never run short of water.

- Don't get scared - no electric lights on the grounds and none in tents. The camp will be kept rustic and woodsy. Improvements are for efficiency in handling the mechanics of the big camps. Steady lights in the big buildings will be particularly helpful. How often, oh how often, have our lights failed us at most strategic moments.

- The new kitchen hook-up with its double serving lines speeded up the service tremendously.

- Remember the cloud of dust at Assembly when the multitude stepped off the porch to hike down the Ridge Road? That's at an end, too. The cement road has been widened at that point to extend to the Assembly porch.

- 1936 campers are still talking about the improved Council Circle - for now it is a complete circle - no breaks - with subway entrance - little storage rooms for wood and properties - heavy arched gates of medieval design, and when the tribes are assembled - the circle is indeed unbroken. And it's vastly warmer, too, for the cold winds cannot drive through the circle and the banked seats reflect the light and heat from the fire. "One of the finest improvements we've ever made" is the concensus of opinion of campers and leaders.

Return postage guaranteed

THE AMERICAN YOUTH FOUNDATION

3713 Washington Blvd.,

St. Louis, Mo.

- CAMPS OF THE FOUR-FOLD LIFE -

Camp MINIWANCA ..... Shelby, Michigan

- on Stony Lake, Lake Michigan and Stony Creek ..... in the wooded sand dunes of Michigan.

Camp MERROWVISTA ... Center Ossipee, N.H.

on Danhole Lake ..... in the Ossipee Mountains